



CUESTA ANNEX MASTER PLAN



Prepared for the City of Mountain View, California

Adopted December 9, 2008

R O Y S T O N H A N A M O T O A L L E Y & A B E Y

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CUESTA ANNEX

MASTER PLAN

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I. INTRODUCTION



The approved Master Plan is a general guide for future development at Cuesta Annex, indicating the approximate location, shape and orientation of the major design elements (detention basin, history museum and orchard).

Funding, design, environmental review, public comment, Parks & Recreation Commission and City Council approvals, and construction of the Master Plan elements will occur when individual elements are ready to proceed.

The flood detention basin will be funded, constructed and maintained by the Santa Clara Valley Water District subject to approvals from the City.

Timing of the History Museum depends on when the Mountain View Historical Association is ready to move forward with the project.

The orchard would be initiated as a future project in the City's Capital Improvement Program, most likely after the design plans for the museum are further developed.



In November 2006, after an extensive community outreach and visioning process, the City Council approved a concept for future development of the 12.5-acre Cuesta Annex. Concept B, “Culture, Agriculture and Passive Use” that reflected major design values identified in the public process (**Appendix A, B**) by retaining existing oak trees and incorporating ideas for a meadow area along Cuesta Drive, perimeter trails and picnic areas.

In July 2007, the City Council confirmed that a history museum building was an appropriate use of the Annex site and also an appropriate application of the “cultural/agricultural structure” use included in Concept B.

When the Cuesta Annex planning process was initiated, the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) was developing its Permanente Creek Flood Protection Project to alleviate flooding primarily in Mountain View (**Appendix C**).

Working collaboratively with SCVWD, a community group, Save Open Space, developed a “Concept B/Flood Detention” plan (**Appendix D**) incorporating the flood detention basin and a 1.5-acre museum site into the City-approved “Concept B.”

In June 2008, the City Council directed preparation of a Master Plan (**Page 14**) for the Cuesta Annex based on 65 acre-feet of flood detention as proposed by SCVWD and building upon the “Concept B/Flood Detention” plan developed by SCVWD and Save Open Space.

On December 9, 2008, City Council modified and adopted the Cuesta Annex Master Plan.



Site analysis presented during 2006 community participation process.



Cuesta Annex, immediately west of Cuesta Park, is a remnant piece of open space that was once approved for residential development but was acquired by the City and kept as open space for the last two decades. The vegetation on the site is a mix of some native plants, such as coast live oak and Engelmann's oak, and some non-native plants, such as black walnuts, plums and dominant invasive Eurasian grasses. The grasses are interspersed with oak and walnut trees in a woodland setting on the south portion of the site; the north portion of the site is an open meadow of non-native grasses that grow well in the disturbed, compacted soil. The Annex in the last twenty years has been used for a variety of informal, passive recreational purposes such as strolling, wildlife viewing, and dog-walking.

Through the community involvement process in summer/fall 2006 and subsequent selection of "culture, agriculture and passive use" as the guiding

principles of the Master Plan, several key landscape values were identified as essential to the Plan. These have been strengthened by preserving and enhancing the following integral landscape features of the final Master Plan:

- Oak woodland (south end) and open meadow (north end)
- Perimeter trail, circumnavigating the Annex
- Views from the north end of the site of the Santa Cruz Mountains to the south/southwest
- A "rural" or undeveloped character
- Visible wildlife including small mammals, raptors and herons
- Native or climate-adapted plants reflecting the seasons
- Connection to the recent agricultural use of the site as an orchard
- A history museum

2. COUNCIL APPROVED MASTER PLAN

CUESTA ANNEX MASTER PLAN

2. COUNCIL APPROVED MASTER PLAN CONCEPT





The Cuesta Annex Master Plan (**facing page**) successfully combines the community's vision for the Annex, flood protection, and the Mountain View Historical Association's desire to sponsor a museum. The major Master Plan elements are combined in a way that compliments one another to provide an experience that is distinct from the experience at Cuesta Park. The major Master Plan elements are described in the following sections.



View A: View of Cuesta Detention Basin, looking northwest from Cuesta Drive entry steps.



master plan components: flood detention basin

On the northern four acres of the Annex site, an approximately 21.5-foot deep depression with sloping sides could accommodate 65 acre-feet of water in the event of a 50- or 100-year flood on Permanente Creek. The site has sufficient room for 1:3 sideslopes, with variations to create a naturalistic depression.

The character of the basin will support the landscape values expressed in the community process, and enhance the existing views to the mountains while providing a meadow area. The basin will be accessible through a network of ADA-compliant paths making areas of the basin available for strolling or learning about ecology, regardless of mobility.

CUESTA ANNEX MASTER PLAN
2. COUNCIL APPROVED MASTER PLAN CONCEPT



View B: View of Cuesta Detention Basin looking southwest toward the History Museum from the Big Meadow next to the creek bed.



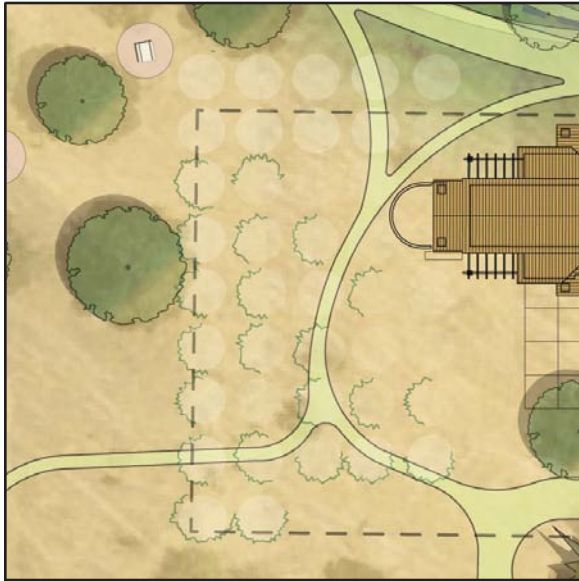
master plan components: history museum

A History Museum has been identified as the program for the “cultural” use of the site. The Museum sits within a 1.5-acre set-aside area between the existing tennis courts and the proposed detention basin.

The Museum will highlight the history of the area and the people who have contributed to the development of Mountain View.



View C: View of Cuesta Detention Basin, History Museum and Orchard, looking south from viewing platform along Cuesta Drive.



master plan components: orchard

An orchard is planned for the central area of the Annex, west of the History Museum. The purpose of the orchard is to preserve the landscape character of fruit production and agriculture that was once common and prominent in the Santa Clara Valley until the 1950s. Exact size and design of the orchard can be determined in conjunction with the design of other features.



master plan components: oak woodland and perimeter path

The existing oak woodland makes a vital contribution to the character of the site and is one of the key assets of Cuesta Annex. The perimeter path is the primary means for visitors to experience the oak woodland.

The most important action to enhance the woodland is to preserve and protect existing healthy oak trees. Additional trees may also be planted to enhance the woodland and will be concentrated at the south end of the site. They will be planted in a manner anticipating the eventual mature oak

community that would develop without irrigation. Other native species of oak may be introduced as well. Restoration of native groundcover and grasses would also contribute to the character of the woodland.

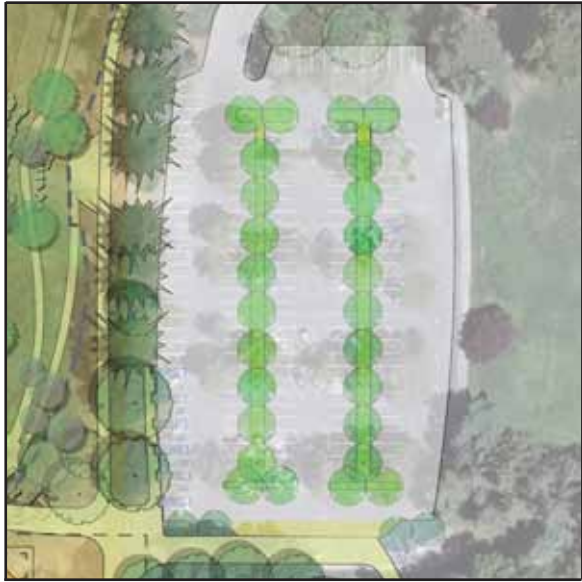
The perimeter path is a key access through Cuesta Annex. As such, its design should reflect its importance allowing for clear navigation and avoiding conflicts of use. Connections to entry points will be obvious and easy to use.



View 2

*Left: Existing Conditions
Below: Simulation of proposed
improvements along Perimeter Path*





master plan components: west parking lot

The main Cuesta Park west parking lot can be reconfigured, mostly within its existing footprint, to accommodate more cars serving increased visits to the Annex, primarily for the History Museum. The main design change would be reconfiguration of the five existing east-west parking aisles to three north-south aisles, creating 90-degree angled parking. This design increases the parking from 130 to approximately 165 spaces.

To accommodate the new design, most of the existing trees within the islands in the parking lot will need to be removed and replaced with new trees. Changes to the parking lot are ultimately contingent on more detailed study of traffic anticipated at the Annex and Cuesta Park.



master plan components: promenade connection

The existing connection between Cuesta Park and Cuesta Annex is narrow and visually unclear. The Promenade Connection allows for defined passage between the two sites, a clear approach to the History Museum, and efficient drop-off from the parking lot. Key features include a widened sidewalk at the south edge of the parking lot, which also serves as a drop off area, and a widened opening at Cuesta Annex where the Promenade enters from Cuesta Park.

The Promenade should take advantage of existing site features, such as the mature plane and redwood trees around the south edge of the parking lot, and sightlines into and out of the Park and Annex that can be used to draw people between the two sites.



View 1

Left: Existing Conditions
Below: Simulation of proposed improvements
at the Promenade Connection.



3. APPENDICES

Cuesta Annex Design Values



① *Walkable perimeter nature trail*

② *Landscape history*

③ *Connection to seasons*



④ *California Landscape*

⑤ *Connection to the wild*

⑥ *Rural character*

⑦ *View of mountains, sense of place*



Community design values embodied in Cuesta Annex, as inventoried by community process 2006-2008.

Concept B

Culture, Agriculture, and Passive Use
(Includes structure, orchard, parking)

Cuesta Park Annex CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA



Concept B
“Culture, Agriculture and Passive Use”

Key Design Features

Planting

Existing oak trees retained
Some additional oak tree planting
Meadow at Cuesta Drive frontage
Perennial grassland established
Thinning of existing oleander on east edge
Orchards

Circulation (Americans with Disabilities Act accessible)

Perimeter trail
Meandering walking trails among oak trees

Program

Community orchards
Community gardens
Cultural / agricultural structure
Picnic areas
Benches along trails for views

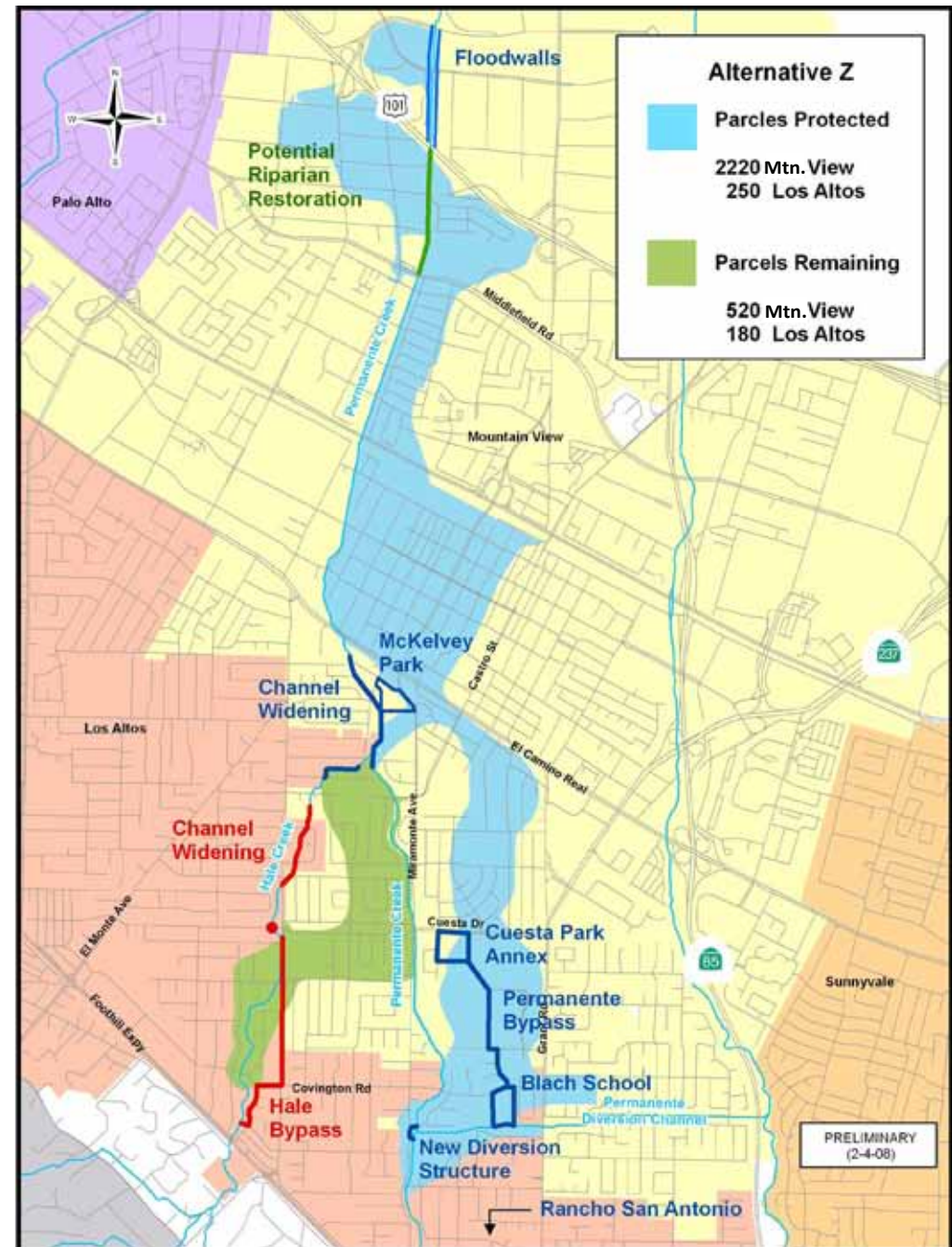
Activities Supported

Gardening
Walking, strolling
Nature watching
Educational and volunteer activities
Picnicking
Views to mountains retained

Community-generated Concept ‘B’ Plan: “Culture, Agriculture and Passive Use”, November 2006.

SCVWD Permanente Creek Flood Protection Project

In November of 2000 the voters of Santa Clara County supported a ballot measure entitled the Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection Plan. This program, which created a countywide special parcel tax, promised four major outcomes (1--Flood protection for homes, schools, businesses and transportation; 2--Clean, safe water in our creeks and bays; 3--Healthy creek and bay ecosystems; 4--Trails, parks and open space along waterways) which would be completed over the course of a 15-year period. Especially pertaining to Cuesta Annex, Outcome 1 of the Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection Plan is designed to protect homes, schools, businesses and transportation networks from flooding. The Plan includes nine new flood protection projects to safeguard approximately 16,000 parcels, including homes, schools, businesses, agricultural lands and public facilities. Vital transportation networks (220 miles of streets and highways in all) will also be protected by these projects. Included in this program are Permanente Creek and Hale Creek flood detention projects.



Flood plain map and Alternative 'Z' studied by Santa Clara Valley Water District that involves Cuesta Annex. Source: Santa Clara Valley Water District.

Concept B/Flood Detention Plan

by SCVWD and Save Open Space

Cuesta Park Multi-use Improvements

JANUARY 23 2008



RHAA

Illustrative Plan



Plan for open space improvements and flood detention facility prepared for Save Open Space and Santa Clara Valley Water District by RHAA in 2007-08.

Cuesta Annex Chronology

October 25, 2005	City Council initiated a visioning process.
January 17, 2006	City Council discussed a visioning process.
February 28, 2006	City Council approved a concept planning process based on limiting use of the site to open space/recreation uses, providing opportunities for broad public input and including PRC in the master planning process.
April 25, 2006	City Council approved a consultant services agreement for the concept planning process.
May 10, 2006	PRC reviewed major components of the concept planning process (stakeholder interview, questionnaire to solicit public input, City web site postings and other outreach to expand community participation).
May 23, 2006	City Council directed preparation of a concept planning process separate from the Recreation Plan development process.
September 13, 2006	PRC prioritized the preferred design/use concepts developed during the Cuesta Annex concept planning process (1. Concept C "Culture, Agriculture and Active Use"; 2. Concept D "Active Sports Use"; 3. Concept B "Culture, Agriculture and Passive Use" and 4. Concept A "Minimal Improvement and Passive Use."
November 14, 2006	City Council Selected Concept B "Culture, Agriculture, and Passive Use" as the preferred design/use concept for Cuesta Annex.
July 10, 2007	City Council confirmed a history museum is an appropriate component and application of the "cultural/agricultural structure" as defined in the adopted Concept B "Culture, Agriculture and Passive Use".
June 24, 2008	City Council directed preparation of the Cuesta Annex Master Plan based on 65 acre-feet of flood detention as proposed by SCWWD and building upon the "Concept B/Flood Detention" plan as developed by Save Open Space.
November 5, 2008	PRC recommended approval of the draft Cuesta Annex Master Plan with a flood detention, history museum and orchard.
December 9, 2008	City Council adopted the Cuesta Annex Master Plan and eliminated the community garden.



ROYSTON HANAMOTO ALLEY & ABEY